

Lafayette Historical Society

NEWSLETTER

P.O. Box 133, Lafayette, California 94549

President: William Wakeman (283-3908)
Editor: Shirley Thomson (284-2995)

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October 1992

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

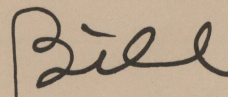
Our intrepid chairman of the Pony Express Memorial Committee has arranged for the purchase of a Pony Express medallion and accompanying memorial plaque. These were recently installed by Ed McNair from the City of Lafayette Public Works Department in Plaza Park. So when you get a change, take a look at them.

On Sunday, October 18, 1992, there will be a dedication ceremony in the park starting at two o'clock. (Please see page 3 for more information.) The plaques are in honor of the nineteen times that Pony Express riders passed through Lafayette, changing horses here, and riding on to their destination — San Francisco. A number of dignitaries have been invited.

My assignment for the dedication ceremony is to furnish a pictorial of the plaza area circa 1860 and to make a few comments on the history of this area of Lafayette.

Now for a commercial . . . We need help: Someone to set a theme and gather materials for our exhibit case at Lucky's, someone to transcribe our oral histories, someone to research where the Centerville, California, post office was located in 1857 when Lafayette received its name, and docents for the fourth-graders' historical walks in the spring. Please give me a call if you can help or if you'd like more information about the projects.

See you at the dedication,



William Wakeman

Sunday, October 18, 2 p.m. — Meet at Plaza Park

NEW LHS BOARD MEMBERS

At the May 12 annual meeting four people were elected to the Board: Diddo Clark, Nancy Flood, Jop Van Overveen, and Shirley Thomson.

Lawyer Diddo Clark, daughter of architect and developer Louise and Johnson Clark, lives and works in Lafayette. The Clark family resided in Oakland when Diddo was born, lived for a time in Berkeley, and then followed the sun to "Lafayette, the Sunshine Valley," in 1954. Diddo's business, Dispute Resolvers, helps people find alternatives to litigation; that includes — among other things — mediation, arbitration, and early neutral evaluation.

Nancy Flood's name is also well known in Lafayette — both for her work and for her family's long associations here. She teaches kindergarten at Springhill School; this year, in fact, marks her 32nd year teaching in the Lafayette School District. Her Flood great-grandparents came to ranch in Happy Valley in the late 1880s, and her great-grandfather Philip Lamp, born in Moraga in the 1860s, was the last owner of the hotel that stood at the center of old Lafayette.

Veterans Jop Van Overveen and Shirley Thomson will begin their new terms in posts they held before — Jop as Vice President and Program Chair and Shirley as Treasurer and Newsletter Editor. >

NEXT BOARD MEETING

The next meeting of LHS Board members and committee chairs is scheduled for Tuesday, October 13, at the meeting room in Town Hall. Members are welcome. >

1992-93 Officers and Committee Chairs

<i>President</i>	<i>Bill Wakeman</i>
<i>Vice President</i>	<i>Jop Van Overveen</i>
<i>Treasurer</i>	<i>Shirley Thomson</i>
<i>Recording Secretary</i>	<i>Ruth Dyer</i>
<i>Corresponding Secretary</i>	<i>Ollie Hamlin</i>
<i>Annual Potluck Dinner</i>	<i>Richard Johnson and Ollie Hamlin</i>
<i>Archives</i>	<i>Irma Somerton</i>
<i>Book Sales</i>	<i>Ruth Dyer</i>
<i>Fire Engine</i>	<i>George Wasson</i>
<i>Hist. Displays</i>	<i>Bill & Irma Somerton</i>
<i>Landmarks</i>	<i>Bob Means</i>
<i>Membership</i>	<i>Jack Bailey</i>
<i>Oral History</i>	<i>Ray Peters, Marechal Duncan, George Wasson, and Nancy Flood</i>
<i>Newsletter</i>	<i>Shirley Thomson</i>
<i>Program</i>	<i>Jop Van Overveen</i>
<i>Publicity</i>	<i>Diddo Clark</i>
<i>Walking Tours</i>	<i>Collette Means</i>

DUES

<i>Student membership</i>	<i>\$2.50</i>
<i>Family membership</i>	<i>\$10.00</i>
<i>Business membership</i>	<i>\$50.00</i>
<i>Life membership</i>	<i>\$100.00</i>

UPCOMING EVENTS . . .

October 3 & 17 . . .	Friends of Laf. Lib. Book Sale — Laf. Com. Cntr., 9am - noon
October 18	LHS Pony Express Historical Marker Dedication — 2pm, Plaza Park, Lafayette
October 23	Moraga Hist. Soc. Annual Banquet — 6:30pm, Soda Activity Ctr., St. Mary's Coll.; speaker, Larry Rodriggs; \$25; for information, write Mrs. Vanderwall, 6 Miramonte Dr., Moraga
November 5, 8, 15 .	Orinda Com. Ctr. course on Orinda history
November 6	Orinda Hist. Soc. day trip to see miniature collection in S.F. — 254-4149 for information
November 7 & 21 .	Friends of Laf. Lib. Book Sale — Laf. Com. Ctr., 9am - noon
November 14 . . .	Moraga Hist. Soc. day trip to Hoover Tower — 376-9224 for information
November 19 . . .	San Ramon Valley Hist. Soc. dinner meeting — 837-2483 or 837-2414 for information

DEDICATION OF PONY EXPRESS HISTORICAL MARKER

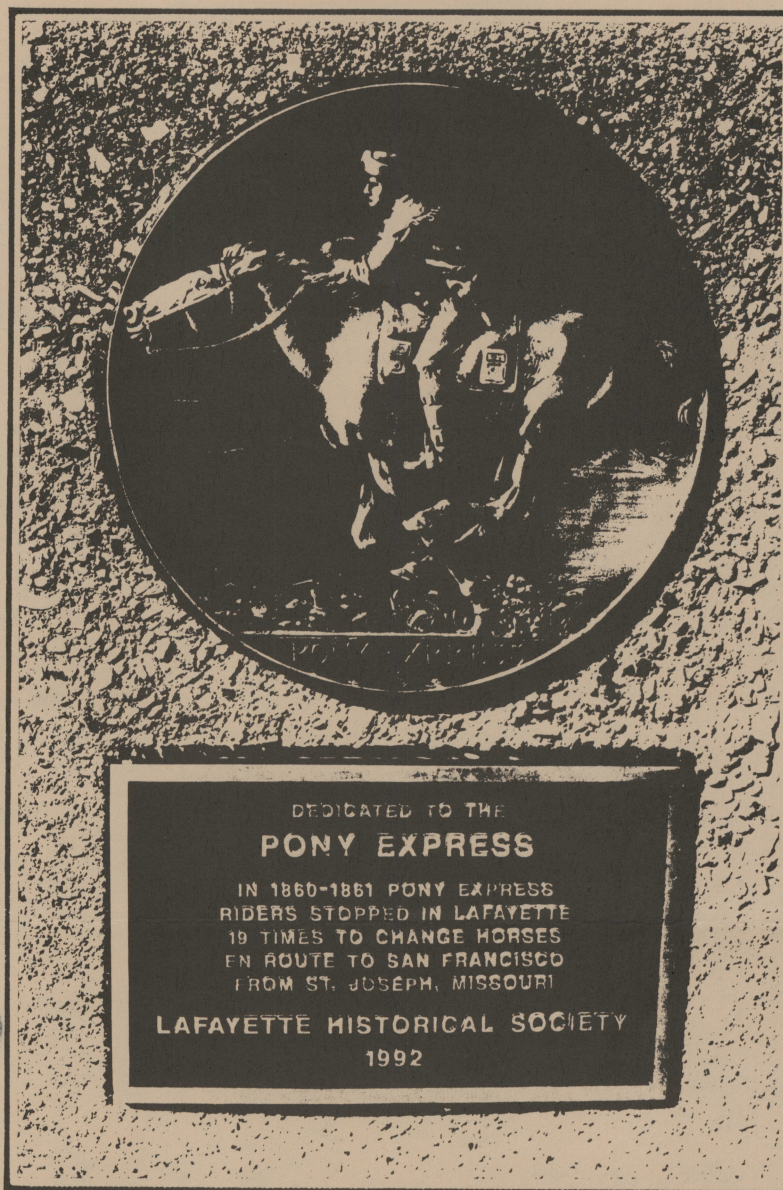
SUNDAY, OCTOBER 18, 2 P.M.

Come to the dedication of the Pony Express historical marker now installed in Plaza Park. Mayor Don Tatzin, Pony Express historian Joe Nardone, special guests, and representatives of LHS will take part.

Meet at 2 p.m. in Plaza Park (Moraga Road and Mt. Diablo Boulevard), Sunday, October 18.

Join Bill Wakeman and others interested in Lafayette's history to take part in a special event, learn some local and Western history, and share cookies and punch in Plaza Park.

See you there! >



Editor's Note

Ruth Dyer submitted the following newspaper article from the Contra Costa Gazette dated Saturday, March 23, 1912. The clipping comes from the Veale Collection — which includes forty-nine cartons of Sheriff R. R. Veale's personal papers — given to the Contra Costa County Historical Society by Frank Bray and now in CCCHS's History Center. Our thanks to Ruth and CCCHS.

The article rekeyed here is verbatim copy of the text as it was published in the Gazette. >

GOLDEN WEDDING EVENT OF VENERABLE PIONEER COUPLE

On Saturday, March 23rd, Mr. and Mrs. Peter Thomson well known and highly esteemed pioneers of Contra Costa county and the Lafayette country celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of their marriage at their home in Lafayette. The anniversary celebration was an event long to be remembered by those present although it was

extremely simple the feature of the day being a dinner which was served at 1:30 at the same hour when the couple were married fifty years before. The home was decorated in white and gold and only the members of the immediate family were present at the dinner and reception.

Mr. Thomson came to California at an early age and worked in San Francisco and Oakland

Anniversary, continued from page 3

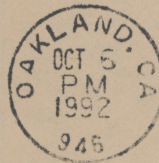
where he filled a position under the first mayor of the city. A few years later when he had accumulated a small sum of money he heard of a lumber boom in Redwood Canyon in Contra Costa county and went to Lafayette where he purchased a small piece of ground and built the first blacksmith shop. He continued to engage in this business for ever after and even at the present time owns the shop in which he desisted from active work a few weeks ago after working at the anvil for 53 years. On March 23rd 1862 he married Miss Angenett Malone the fifteen year old daughter of the former State Controller the ceremony being performed at the home of the bride in Lafayette.

During his many years of business activity Mr. Thomson has been successful in his financial affairs and in addition to owning large interests in the Lafayette region he is a large stock holder in the R. N. Burgess company. Nine children blessed the union of whom six are living,

William, Anne, Frank, Ethel, Gertrude and Peter Thomson, Jr. On their golden anniversary the venerable couple received many handsome gifts and the congratulations of their friends all of whom throughout Contra Costa county join with the Gazette in wishing the couple many years of continued health and prosperity.

Those present at the reception and wedding dinner on Saturday were: Mr. and Mrs. William Thomson, Mr. and Mrs. Frank Thomson, Mr. and Mrs. Henry Crowe, Mrs. Gertrude Barnard, Mr. and Mrs. Peter Thomson Jr., Myrtle Thomson, May Thomson, Clifford Thomson, Clara Thomson, Curtis Thomson, Dorothy Barnard, Mrs. Lizzie Wilson, Mr. and Mrs. Leonard Wilson, Mr. and Mrs. Robert Thomson, Mr. and Mrs. Robert McNeil, Mr. and Mrs. Edgar Keefe, Eta Keefe, Stuart McNeil, Alice McNeil, William McNeil, Roger Hamilton, Bertha McNeil, Mr. and Mrs. Cecil Jones, Cecil Jones, Jr. >

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